

# Ellen White on Ordaining Women: "The Question is Not for Men to Settle" | BY GILBERT VALENTINE



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**A**t the beginning of a landmark series of articles in *Spectrum* in 1970, Herold Weiss and the late Roy Branson sounded a prophetic challenge to the church concerning the need to rescue Ellen White from those who would misuse her. She was so often quoted on opposite sides of Adventist theological debates and made to speak with so many accents that Weiss and Branson wondered whether she would soon completely lose her own voice. "The result of having so many Ellen Whites is that the Adventist church may soon have no Ellen White at all," they warned. "Among the top priorities of the church," they suggested, was the urgent need to establish "more objective ways of understanding what Ellen White said."<sup>1</sup>

As the church marks the centennial of Ellen White's death on July 16, 1915, and forty-five years after *Spectrum* began its series, the call is as prophetic and timely as ever.

Weiss and Branson suggested a number of important steps the church should take in order to make possible a

more consistent interpretation of White's inspired writings. One of these critically important steps was the need to take seriously the task of recovering "the social and intellectual milieu in which she lived and wrote." It was an imperative to recognize "the economic, political, religious, and educational issues that were the context of her words," because "either Ellen White lives for us first in her own cultural situation or she does not live for us at all."<sup>2</sup>

This did not mean that understanding Ellen White in terms of the nineteenth century would make what she said irrelevant to the twentieth century. To the contrary, "finding how her words pertained to the past century is a necessary step in establishing their relevance to our own. Like most things in nature, words do not live in a vacuum." We might add that neither do ideas live in a vacuum.

Following the call from Branson and Weiss, the later 1970s and early 1980s saw the emergence of a wide ranging scholarly study that has helped the church enormously

in understanding Ellen White in her nineteenth century context. Gary Land, Jonathan Butler, Ronald Numbers, Ron Graybill and George Knight, among others, helped document the contextual background, although at times these studies seemed iconoclastic and caused the church discomfort. Later, some of Knight's doctoral students continued the process less jarringly and, with Knight's prodding, church publishing houses caught the vision of what had to be done.

One hundred years after the death of Ellen White the need for a critical understanding of her context is even more urgent if the church is to continue to benefit from her words and her ideas. In 2015 there is still much to be discovered about her nineteenth century context that will help keep her words alive in the twenty-first century.

### A Case Study: Women in Ministry

A particularly helpful illustration of how the exploration of historical context helps in understanding Ellen White is a fresh critical awareness of the deep social changes occurring in Australia and New Zealand at the time Ellen White resided there. This new awareness provides an important background for understanding the significant cluster of Ellen White's radical (for her time) mid-1890s comments that urged the church to make space for women to take up full-time roles in public ministry. The cultural and historical context of these particular statements is especially relevant to current toxic church debates about formally recognizing the role of women in pastoral ministry.

In an earlier article on Ellen White's provocative statements encouraging women to take a more public role in pastoral ministry and in Christian welfare, I noted that the statements take on fresh relevance when understood against the background of Ellen White's exposure to, and her familiarity with, both the women's suffrage movement and the liquor law reform agitation (Temperance) in New Zealand and Australia in 1893–1895.<sup>3</sup> When Ellen White resided in the southern hemisphere, social change of momen-

tous proportions was sweeping New Zealand and Australia as both countries moved to give women the right to vote in the election of their national leaders. Ellen White was not unaware of these social movements.

This present article draws attention to another newly discovered contextual dimension that is perhaps even more important for understanding Ellen White's call for women to engage in public work and pastoral ministry. In July, 1895, her call to the church in this regard had a radical edge and clearly pushed social boundaries.

*Women who are willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord should be appointed to visit the sick, look after the young, and minister to the necessities of the poor. They should be set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands. In some cases they will need to counsel with the church officers or the minister; but if they are devoted women, maintaining a vital connection with God, they will be a power for good in the church. This is another means of strengthening and building up the church. We need to branch out more in our methods of labor. Not a hand should be bound, not a soul discouraged, not a voice should be hushed; let every individual labor, privately or publicly, to help forward this grand work.<sup>4</sup>*

Three years later Ellen White was even more assertive in her call for a wider role for women when she wrote:

*Seventh-day Adventists are not in any way to belittle woman's work. If a woman puts her housework in the hands of a faithful, prudent helper, and leaves her children in good care, while she engages in the work, the Conference should have wisdom to understand the justice of her receiving wages. . . .*

*. . . should not such labor be looked upon as being as rich in results as the work of the ordained ministers? Should it not command the hire of the laborer? Would not such workers be defrauded if they were not paid?*

*This question is not for men to settle. The Lord has settled it.<sup>5</sup>*

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## The Maitland Daily Mercury

November 28, 1894 p 4.

### A Deaconess for St. Mary's

"Last evening a meeting of the parishioners of St Mary's parish, West Maitland, was held in St Mary's Hall for the purpose of deciding upon the engaging of a deaconess to assist the incumbent in his multifarious duties. There were between fifty and sixty persons present. . . . The Chairman announced the object of the meeting, and pointed out the necessity of having such a worker in the parish . . . . A deaconess would be of great assistance in the spiritual welfare of the parish . . . a young lady named Miss Reid, a public school teacher, who was in receipt of a salary of £ 120 a year; but who was so devoted to the work of Christ that she was willing to give herself up entirely to the work at a much smaller income. . . . It was pointed out that before being ordained the young lady would have to undergo a course of reading in certain subjects, and to pass an examination . . . and the ceremony of admitting her as a deaconess would probably take place in the parish church."

Ellen White later became so deeply convicted on the need for such women in ministry that she felt it to be her duty to "create a fund from my tithe money" to ensure that such women ministers would be paid, and she used it to support the women in their ministry.<sup>6</sup> As Arthur Patrick has noted insightfully, only the conviction that such men and women had the call "to preach and teach the word" in a recognized authentic ministry could enable a Seventh-day Adventist to so use the sacred tithe.<sup>7</sup>

The sudden appearance in the 1890s of this type of counsel to "set apart" women in ministry and pay them has challenged leaders in the Adventist Church: How best to understand the counsel and how to implement it? Previous studies by Bert Haloviak, Ginger Hanks Harwood, and Beverly Beem have sought to understand this provocative counsel by looking at the context within the Adventist church.<sup>8</sup> This paper suggests that the context of developments in the wider religious world in which Ellen White lived provides an even more crucial background.

The social and religious context of the 1890s statements was characterized by a vigorous public discussion occurring in the Anglican Church and in the public press, both in Australia and New Zealand, about the need for women in ministry and their role as deaconesses. What was the role of deaconess? Adventists today, conditioned by their own traditional use of the term may fail to understand the sig-

nificance of the debate in the Australian context of the 1890s and thus miss or minimize the significance of Ellen White's challenge to the church.

In Adventist practice the deaconess role is limited to an internal church function, confined to preparing for communion (bread and grape juice), assisting with removing the cloth from the communion table, assisting with foot-washing (towels and basins), welcoming folk to church, caring for the flowers, assisting with the church cleaning roster, and helping with Dorcas work. Occasionally the role might mean visiting elderly members or shut-ins, although in most Adventist churches this task is usually attended to by the elders. As the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* explains, traditionally deaconesses are not ordained.<sup>9</sup>

The Anglican understanding of the term "deaconess" related somewhat to these Adventist kinds of tasks, but in other ways was markedly different. A deaconess in the developing Anglican usage of the 1890s was a professionally trained, paid, full-time employed ministerial role in the church. Whether that ministry should be fully equated with the traditional third order of clergy the Deacon (with its administrative level of Arch-Deacon) was a topic of debate. This paper argues that Ellen White and her fellow church members in Australia and New Zealand during the mid-1890s would have been aware of this important debate; the discussion featured in public newspapers.

At the time of Ellen White's residence in Australia, the Anglican Church constituted the dominant majority of the population in every state of Australia and in New Zealand. The greatest concentrations were in Sydney (forty-six percent) and around Hobart in southeast Tasmania. In some local regions around Sydney the density reached fifty-five percent.<sup>10</sup> Consequently Anglican Church affairs were





**W. C. White  
with wife May  
and family**

deemed of importance by editors who regularly published lengthy articles on Anglican matters in their newspapers—papers which Adventists also read. Church discussions often became public discussions.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, new converts to Adventism often came from an Anglican background. The Lacey family, for example, was one such family. In May 1895, Ellen White's forty-four year old son, W. C. White married twenty-one year old May Lacey, a former, very active, Anglican from Tasmania. The Lacey family had migrated from England and settled in Tasmania in the early 1880s. They became close friends with the large family of their local Anglican minister in Newtown, Hobart. May and her siblings spent much time together with the children of their minister friend. Until her death in 1890 May's mother, a skilled church organist, continued playing the large pipe organ at St John's Anglican church in Newtown, even after she became an Adventist.<sup>12</sup> Following the marriage of May and Willie, May's aging father David and his new wife and family moved to Cooranbong near the new College where they became close neighbors of Ellen White. Networks of neigh-

bors, relatives and school friends meant that early Adventists in Australia remained aware of what was being discussed in Anglican circles.

World-wide Anglicanism in the 1890s was on a journey of rethinking the role of women in the life of the church. The topic was a live issue in Australia during Ellen White's residence there. Beginning in the 1860s in England, in response to the Tractarian movement, Anglicanism had taken steps to allow the formation of communities of sisterhoods to facilitate the development of women in religious life and involve them in community service work. In doing so, church leaders banned perpetual vows and took care to avoid replicating the Catholic convent or monastic system. As a counterweight to the high church demand for sisterhoods, Anglican leaders also authorized the revival of the ancient order of deaconesses which had been lost during the Middle Ages, when the ministry of women had been confined and absorbed into the monastic system. Cautiously Anglicans had begun to encourage the participation of women in the public ministry role of deaconess.<sup>13</sup>

This new order of ministry for women had

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spread timidly to the Australian colonies in 1885, with the establishment of a deaconess order in Melbourne to assist with church work in inner city slums. This was the year the Adventist church was first being established in Australia. In 1887 in Tasmania, when the Lacey family was making its transition to Adventism, the attempt to intro-

## The Maitland Daily Mercury

May 25, 1895.

### Admission of a Deaconess

"On Tuesday evening, at St Mary's Church, West Maitland, Miss Jessie Read, who has been laboring for the past few months in the parish as a deaconess, under the oversight of the esteemed incumbent, was formally admitted to that office. The more importance was attached to the proceeding by reason that it is a new departure as far as the diocese of Newcastle is concerned. [The Bishop of the Diocese of Newcastle and four other clergymen participated – all named.]

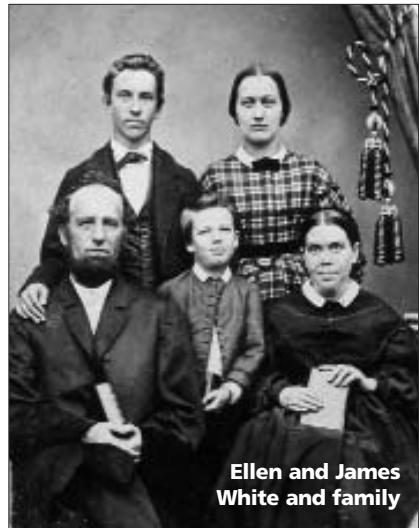
An interesting address was delivered by Archdeacon Tyrell on the scriptural and church authority of the office of deaconess, and on the important work to be done by organized female agency in the church.

The candidate, who was attired in a plain black dress, with white collar and cuffs, and white cap, was presented by the Archdeacon to the Bishop sitting in front of the holy table. The Archdeacon in reply to the Bishop having stated that the candidate had been trained, taught, examined, and approved, and he believed her to be fit for the discharge of the office, her examination by the Bishop followed on lines similar to that pursued in the case of a deacon, the differences of duties being considered. The final question, setting forth the duties of the office, was as follows: 'It appertaineth to the office of a Deaconess to aid in all spiritual ministrations except the public services of the church; to assist in all such good works as shall be committed unto her; to nurse the sick; to visit and relieve the poor and afflicted; to tend and instruct the young and the ignorant; to minister especially to women who need to be brought to the grace and service of God; and in all things to help the minister of Christ in any parish to which she may be appointed to serve. Will you do this earnestly and humbly, in the love of God and in faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ?' The answer, 'I will strive to do so, by the help of God,' having been given by the candidate in a clear, distinct voice, . . . the Bishop, standing, prayed that God who had given her the will to do all these things, would grant her also strength and power to fulfil the same. . . . The Bishop, then laying his hands upon the candidate's head, gave her authority to execute the office of a deaconess in the Church of God, and afterwards handing her a New Testament, exhorted her to take heed that she taught nothing contrary to the doctrine of Christ contained in it. . . ."

duce a sisterhood in their Tasmanian Anglican diocese produced vigorous opposition from many parishes. It was argued in Synod (the meeting was prominently featured in the local newspaper) that instead, it was much better that "noble kind-hearted, Christian women" be

"organized, ordained, and paid" as part of restoring "the ancient and scriptural order of deaconess".<sup>14</sup> In the early 1890s, training institutes for deaconesses were gradually established all around the colonies.<sup>15</sup> Bishops were soon setting apart professionally trained women to the office of deaconess in special ordination ceremonies, and appointing them to work in the parishes of their dioceses. As in Tasmania, the development was accompanied by a spirited debate between those bishops who saw the full-time deaconess office as a parallel office to that of deacon, and therefore (in Anglican polity) a clergy office, and those who saw it only as a lay office.<sup>16</sup> Evangelical Anglicans, mostly from the Sydney diocese, viewed the role of deaconess as simply lay participation. As such, the work of a deaconess did not need to be supervised by a bishop. In keeping with this "lay" view, a private deaconess training institution, "Bethany," had been established in the suburb of East Balmain in Sydney in August 1891.<sup>17</sup> Its welfare activities were frequently reported in both the local and national press.<sup>18</sup> Deaconess training institutions and welfare homes following this model began to appear in other Australian cities and in New Zealand.

Two years later, in 1893, the Kilburn Sisters, a religious order from St Augustine's Parish Church in London, startled Anglicans in Sydney by establishing a training college in Waverly, a southern suburb in Sydney. The high church sponsors of the Kilburn order were more interested in the communal "sisterhood" features of the involvement of women in church work. They argued that the deaconess should be accorded the same clerical status as the male deacon.<sup>19</sup> Other institutions sprang up in other cities after this model. The two institutions—the Bethany training



Ellen and James White and family

institute and the Waverly training college—represented the two approaches to the problem of finding a meaningful and acceptable role for women in ministry in Australia. The role of women and the meaning of their ordination thus became a major issue of church and community discussion in the colonies, and an important question was whether these women would work at their own initiative in congregations or under the direction of the bishops. The discussion clearly parallels the issue discussed in Ellen White's 1895 statement.

Many examples of the widespread discussions taking place in religious circles can be found in local newspapers and illustrate the new developments taking place in the religious world around Ellen White. In May 1893, for example, when Ellen White was in New Zealand, it was announced in New Zealand newspapers that the newly appointed Anglican Bishop of Christchurch would be bringing with him from London an experienced deaconess for the purpose of initiating "a like order in the colony, and to give instructions as to the work."<sup>20</sup> The deaconess concerned had been on the staff of William Temple, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Within six months of her arrival in New Zealand deaconess work had been firmly established and women were being ordained to this rank of clergy. By the end of 1894 the Auckland Synod was also announcing plans to follow Christchurch, introduce the order, and ordain deaconesses. The involvement of women in this kind of ministry was again extensively reported in newspaper articles. Before the end of the October conference discussion had turned to the question of whether women should also now be allowed to vote in the Synod meetings, following the granting of the right to vote in national elections.<sup>21</sup>

In September, 1893, at a service for the "making of a Deaconess" in St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney, the Bishop Smith noted the important contribution that women could make in urban ministry.<sup>22</sup> At a major South Pacific-wide Anglican Church congress which convened in the new St David's Cathedral in Hobart in January

1894, the role of these ordained deaconesses and the meaning of their office featured as a topic of spirited discussion, which was extensively reported in Australian newspapers. At this time Ellen White and her colleagues were conducting an evangelistic camp meeting in a central suburb of Melbourne, with its 35% Anglican population.<sup>23</sup> In his opening address at the Hobart Congress on January 24, the presiding Bishop Montgomery appealed to the representatives from every diocese in Australia and New Zealand saying, "I trust Congress will exhibit the self-confidence of a young church and keep a very open mind toward new situations . . . let us welcome the extension of serious responsibility to women in the affairs of the church."<sup>24</sup> Reverend Spence of Goulburn, NSW, spoke for many of his colleagues when he asserted, "Inasmuch as deaconesses were a branch of the clerical order they could not be considered as belonging to the laity."<sup>25</sup> Only the Sydney diocese disagreed.

Because the ordination of women was something of a novelty, newspapers frequently reported on the formal ordination services for these deaconesses, during which the bishop formally laid hands of ordination on them, sometimes in a Cathedral, sometimes in parish churches. Typical of many such reports in the public press was the ordination of two deaconesses in Christchurch in January 1894.<sup>26</sup> The ordination of a deaconess in St Mary's church in West Maitland, NSW in May, 1895 was given prominence in local papers. "Importance was attached to the proceedings by reason that it is a new departure as far as the diocese of Newcastle is concerned," reported the *Maitland Weekly Mercury*.<sup>27</sup> Maitland was just twenty miles away from the new College site at Cooranbong, where increasing numbers of Adventists were congregating in 1895. Across the colonies of Australia and New Zealand, Anglicans adopted the new initiative, training and ordaining women in ministry to help address the challenge of mission with its widespread social needs and desperate conditions of poverty occasioned by the severe economic depression of the mid-1890s.

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As Bert Haloviak has documented, under the leadership of Ellen White and seasoned ministers like John O. Corliss, Adventists too threw themselves into new types of "helping hand" ministry to

address the widespread economic distress experienced by local families. Haloviak notes how this distinctive social welfare approach to Adventist ministry and evangelism extended to every large city in every state and to many local churches. He also carefully documents how the approach differed from that of John Harvey Kellogg in Chicago. It proved to be a most effective approach to church growth, and it depended heavily on the involvement of Adventist women in public work.<sup>28</sup>

Adventist leaders up to this time had no difficulty with the concept of giving pastorally gifted women licenses to function as ministers and preach the word. There were many such. But also aware of a broader ministry that women were able to do and, that they could be more effective in this public work than men, in mid-1895 Ellen White urged Adventists to adopt the practice of setting apart women for this full-time, paid, public ministry. This seems clearly to have reflected an awareness of an authorized—"ordained"—public role for women in ministry in the wider religious world.

Perhaps it was this encouragement that emboldened the church to include their traditional, internally focused, deaconess-caring-for-the-communion-table-cloth role among the ordained. On Sabbath, August 10, 1895, for example, in the Ashfield Church in Sydney, (a church Ellen White often attended and where she was occasionally invited to preach) deaconesses were

"ordained" along with elders and deacons by Elder J. O. Corliss by prayer and the laying on of hands.<sup>29</sup> In 1896, before John Corliss left Australia, one of his last acts was to ordain a woman, Bertha Larwood, to the ministry of deaconess in Perth, Western Australia. This was an event significant enough for W. C. White to report it approvingly to the Union Executive Committee.<sup>30</sup> In 1900, back at Ashfield, W. C. White himself led out in a Sabbath service that included his laying hands of ordination on two deaconesses, Mrs. Brannyrane and Mrs. Patchin; a significant enough event to note in his diary.<sup>31</sup> It seems that in Adventism too there was ambiguity in role function, as in Anglicanism, but Ellen White's mid-1890s counsel talked about paid full-time and part-time roles.

This paper argues that the discussion in the wider religious community in Australia and New Zealand in the mid-1890s about the role of women in formal, recognized, public ministry provides an important backdrop for Ellen White's provocative comments about the need for the involvement of women in the ministry of the Adventist church, and that Adventist women should be "set apart" by the "laying on of hands" to this public work. Ellen White's clear and provocative encouragement of women in full-time ministry in the Adventist church, and the importance of paying them for their work and ordaining them for it, were not comments made in a vacuum.

### **Women and the Ordained Ministry**

In the years after Ellen White's death in 1915, women in public ministry in the Adventist Church steadily declined as the church was negatively influenced by the reactionary fundamentalist movement. In the Anglican Communion, Sean Gill notes that confusion and ambiguity concerning the nature of the deaconess role and its relationship to the Anglican ordained priesthood, persisted for decades and hampered recruitment to this form of ministry far into the twentieth century. In 1920 the matter came to Lambeth Palace, but the decisions taken only

made the ambiguity worse. In the mission fields of South Asia and the Far East, where there was less prejudice and the effectiveness of women in evangelistic outreach was recognized, the role of women in ministry flourished. By 1930, deaconesses were allowed to conduct baptisms; funerals were later added to the list of permissible duties. In 1944, because of the special need of the church in China, the Bishop of Hong Kong, in an Anglican world first, ordained deaconess Florence Li to the priesthood, authorizing her to conduct communion for her congregants.

Discrepancies and anomalies in salary and pension schemes between deacons and deaconesses continued to create frustration, and eventually full equality of the deaconess office with that of the third clerical order of the Deacon was recognized. In 1987 the office of deaconess was merged with that of deacon into one "diaconate" office. But then, the inconsistency of discriminating against women by ordaining for one office but not for another became intolerable in the wider church, and with the permission of Church headquarters in London (Lambeth Palace) in 1968, the Anglican Church in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and Hong Kong and Southeast Asia were embraced in the communion, even as they fully admitted women to the ordained priesthood. England did not take the historic step until 1994.

If one might be permitted to see a "trajectory" in the inspired counsels of Ellen White, might this newly recovered larger context of Ellen White's 1890s statements suggest that her counsel to the delegates at the 2015 San Antonio General Conference might well have been to recognize what God is indeed already doing in the church for the world?

One hundred years after the death of Ellen White, the task of recovering the context of her times continues to challenge the church. ■

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White in *The Prophet and the Presidents* (2011). Recently he co-edited, with Woodrow Whidden, a Festschrift for George Knight entitled *Adventist Maverick* (2014). He is married to Kendra Haloviak Valentine, who also teaches at La Sierra University, and enjoys visiting his Kiwi homeland with him.

## Footnotes

1. Herold Weiss and Roy Branson, "Ellen White: A Subject for Adventist Scholarship," *Spectrum* 2, (Autumn 1970): 30–33.
2. Ibid.
3. "When President Wilson Changed His Mind About Policy for Women," *Spectrum* 43:2 (Spring 2015): 72–79.
4. "The Duty of the Minister and the People," *Review*, (July 9, 1895): 433–434. Ginger Hanks Harwood and Beverly Beem provide an excellent discussion of the wide range of these provocative statements by Ellen White with a focus on the internal Adventist Church context. "'Not a Hand Bound; Not a Voice Hushed': Ordination and Foundation Adventist Understandings of Women in Ministry." *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, Vol 52, No 2, (2014): 235–273.
5. Ellen G. White, Manuscript, March 22, 1898. Ellen White added that men should "do your duty to the women who labor in the gospel, whose work testifies that they are essential to carry the truth into families. Their work is just the work that must be done. In many respects a woman can impart knowledge to her sisters that a man cannot. The cause would suffer great loss without this kind of labor. Again and again the Lord has shown me that women teachers are just as greatly needed to do the work to which he has appointed them as are men. They should not be compelled by the sentiments and rules of others to depend upon donations for their payment, any more than should the ministers."
6. Ellen G. White to Uriah Smith and A. T. Jones, April 21/22, 1898, 9–10.
7. Arthur Patrick, "Ellen Gould White and the Australian Woman, 1891–1900," M Lit Thesis, University of New England (1984), 85.
8. Bert Haloviak, "Ellen White and the Australasian Ministers, 1893 to 1901: An Analysis of the Documents," 2005; Ginger Hanks Harwood and Beverly Beem, *Ibid*.
9. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (Washington DC, Review and Herald, 1976), 379.
10. James Jupp, (ed) *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and their Origins* (Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 2001), 324. Catholics represented approximately 26% and Methodists, 10.1%.
11. Arthur Patrick's PhD Dissertation, "Christianity and Culture in Colonial Australia: Selected Catholic, Anglican, Wesleyan and Adventist Perspectives," (1991), has a helpful summary of the social issues Anglicanism grappled with in Australia during the 1890s.
12. H. Camden Lacey to A. W. Spalding, June 5, 1947. May's elder brother, Herbert, mentioned years later that the family lamented that in their Adventist worship services they missed the singing of some of the grand old Anglican hymns, especially those that spoke of the Trinity.
13. Sean Gill gives a helpful account of the revival of the order of Deaconess in *Anglicanism. Women and the Church of England*, (London, SPCK, 1994), 163–169.



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14. *Mercury*, (April 6, 1888): 3; (April 14, 1888; Supplement): 1.
15. Discussion about the appropriateness of a public role for women in this kind of ministry was a frequent topic of correspondence and discussion in internal Anglican publications. See for example *The Church of England Messenger for Victoria and Ecclesiastical Gazette for the Diocese of Melbourne* (Vic. 1889–1905).
16. According to Mavis Rose, the controversy sparked when the Reverend George Spencer, Rector of Bega, NSW, argued that because of the laying on of hands by a bishop a deaconess was really a female deacon and a member of the clergy. *The Australian Record*, July 18 and 25, 1891. See "Formal Women's Ministry: The Deaconess" in *Freedom from Sanctified Sexism—Women Transforming the Church*, (Brisbane: Allira Publications 1996), 56–75. The chapter is available at [http://www.catherinecollege.library.net/related/rose\\_04.asp](http://www.catherinecollege.library.net/related/rose_04.asp)
17. Another evidence of Adventist awareness of the Anglican initiatives is that "Bethany" was also the name given to a deaconess-like "helping hand center" for unwed mothers, recovering alcoholic women, and released prisoners, established in an aristocratic suburb of Napier by the Adventist Caro family in 1898. See E R Caro, "The Napier Bethany Home," *Bible Echo*, (Mar 7, 1898): 77. Mrs Caro, "The Bethany Home, Napier, N.Z.," *Union Conference Record*, (July 19, 1899): 1.
18. See for example, *Bowral Free Press and Berrima District Intelligencer*, (April 21, 1894), 2; and *Sydney Morning Herald*, (November 5, 1895), 6.
19. Mavis Rose, *Ibid.*
20. *Christchurch Press*, (May 23, 1893): 2. See also *New Zealand Herald*, (19 May 1893): 6. The new Bishop made the matter of the involvement of women in this form of ministry work a major topic of his annual Synod meeting in Christchurch in October 1993. See *Christchurch Press*, (18 October 1893): 2; *Wellington Evening Post*, (18 October 1893): 2; *New Zealand Herald*, (15 August 1893): 5.
21. *New Zealand Herald*, (17 October 1894): 6.
22. Mavis Rose, *Ibid.*
23. At the Melbourne camp, the novel concept of a "Union Conference" was adopted.
24. *The Mercury*, (January 24, 1894): 2.
25. *The Mercury*, (January 25, 1894): 3. The whole of page three of the large page *Mercury* was given to reporting discussions at the Congress. Other newspapers around the colony also reported the proceedings see for example the *Melbourne Argus*, (Jan 24, 25, 1894).
26. *The Christchurch Press*, (13 January 1894), p 6 reports it as an "impressive ceremony of ordination" by the Bishop of Christchurch the previous day.
27. *The Maitland Weekly Mercury*, (May 25, 1895), 2. Six months previously the same paper had reported on church discussions and approvals for the appointment of the deaconess, (November, 28, 1894): 4. *The Newcastle Morning Herald* (May 22, 1895), p8 also reported on the deaconess being ordained by the Bishop of Newcastle who "repeated two prayers and laying his hands upon the head of the candidate at the Holy Table admitted her to the order." The story was also reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, (22 May 1895): 5.
28. "Ellen White and the Australasian Ministers, 1893 to 1901: An Analysis of the Documents," 2005
29. *Ashfield Church Minutes*, August 10, 1895.
30. W. C. White to Members of the Union Conference committee, July 15, 1896. WCW, Bk 10, p 195.
31. *Ashfield Church Minutes*, June 6, 1900. W. C. White also recorded the event in his diary for the same date. See Arthur Patrick "The Ordination of Deaconesses," *Adventist Review*, (January 18, 1986): 18–19.
32. Arthur Patrick, points out that Ellen White's 1895 language about setting apart by "the laying on of hands" in the context would have clearly been understood by Adventists as ordination. "Ellen Gould White and the Australian Woman, 1891–1900," M Lit Thesis, University of New England, (1984), 85.
33. See Gilbert Valentine "Flying Bishops, Women Clergy, and the Processes of Change in the Anglican Communion," *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, Vol. 51, No 2, (Fall, 2013): 219–265.